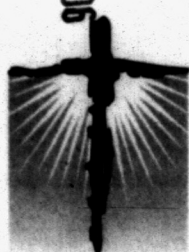


# Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

SINCE 1877  
BER 7, 2006  
VOL. 130  
No. 48

DEC 19 2006



MISSISSIPPI  
BAPTISTS

## Gospel message taking hold in Africa

**NIGER, West Africa** — Pregnant Songhai women approach the cinderblock, tin-roofed clinic of Kanazi for routine checkups. They come one by one. When Sally Womble reminds them to return next month for another exam, she often hears the response, "Inshallah" or "if God wills."

After 12 years in Niamey, Niger, Songhai team strategy coordinators Brad and Sally Womble have grown accustomed to the phrase. "It's their excuse," Sally says. "It removes their sense of responsibility, so because of that there's no tomorrow for them. Their tomorrows only come if God wills."

While this commonly-held view of God releases the Songhai from any earthly responsibility, Brad Womble suggests this mentality also keeps the Songhai in bondage. In the past decade, Womble says he's never heard a young person mention any long-term goals.

"These people want to eat lunch today, and that's it," Womble says. "That's as far as they see. Their belief in God is a god who is so far removed, and so judgmental, and so distant that he really doesn't care, and the only interaction they'll ever have with him is in judgment."

There's a larger problem than just the lack of long-range goals. There's spiritual darkness. "The Songhai aren't only in a false religion," Womble says. "They are active participants in the demonic spirit world. So they're even deeper than hopeless."

Ali, a church planter from Niger on the Songhai team, attributes some of the Songhai's hopelessness to their Islamic beliefs. "If you pass 40 years of age without making your peace with God through the Muslim faith, you cannot after that," he says.

Because 99.8% of the Songhai people are both Muslim and animistic (worship of nature and natural objects, such as trees and animals), demonic worship and possession are common to their culture.

"You can go into villages where they're walking bodies, but there is no person left in that (village)," Womble says. "There's just blankness. All the life is gone from their eyes."

In addition to spiritual darkness, social pressures also inhibit some Songhai people from believing the Gospel. Because their society revolves around the family unit, the Songhai rarely make decisions on an individual basis.

"For a Songhai to accept Christ they are rejecting their culture, their family, everything they've ever been taught," Sally says.

### God working

The Songhai team understands the obstacles preventing Songhai from coming to faith in Christ and has developed a master



**WITHOUT WITNESS** — A boat loaded with passengers glides through the water near Timbuktu, Mali. From Niamey, Niger, to Timbuktu, more than one million Songhai live in West Africa. Though most profess allegiance to Allah, demonic worship and possession are common among this people group. Gospel seeds have been sown in one area where the Songhai live, but the majority of this people group still have no Christian witness. (IMB photo)

plan to target major market towns. On "Market Day," villagers throughout the area come to the major market town to buy or sell goods. Because these towns are bigger and more progressive than smaller villages, they are considered the lead towns in the area.

"We cannot get to every small, little village," Womble says. "However, if we can plant churches in those big towns, and teach those churches it is their God-given responsibility to reach their neighbors, their families and the next village for Christ, then it will be taken care of."

Despite spiritual darkness and social pressures surrounding the people, the Wombles say they have seen God at work among the Songhai.

When Brad led a volunteer team to prayerwalk in the heart of the Songhai kingdom in Gao, Mali, he says volunteers encountered spiritual warfare firsthand.

After praying through the village where Womble says people had been visibly possessed by demonic forces, the group made their way to the boat on which they had come. While walking back to the boat, Womble says a young boy tugged on his sleeve.

"I finally got all the volunteers in the boat and I was the only one left out there," Womble recalls. "I got down on my knees because he was so little and said, 'What?' The boy replied, 'I know you have been praying to the real God for us. Please don't stop because we need it.'"

The Wombles also have seen God moving through the work of their team members.

Brad first introduced Ali to Christ in 1994. As a Niger native, familiar with the

Songhai language and culture, Ali has extended the Gospel as a church planter in the village of Gotheye.

Through this church plant, Ali says he sees an advantage to sharing the Gospel in his own country. "When the black man sees the white man," Ali says, "the first thing he might (think) in his head is to have money, but when the black man sees the black man come to see him, the first time, he's going to think, 'These people are like me. I know he doesn't have money like me, and so I want to hear what he wants to tell me.'"

Though Sally says she will never be accepted as a native Songhai woman, villagers in the Kanazi area claim her as one of their own.

Last September, the Wombles were walking along a red clay path toward a Songhai village when Mamadou, a Zarma man living in another village, began calling "Sally Biyo!" The "yo" on the end gives it possession. He was saying "she's ours" with that ending.

As he ran to catch her, Mamadou told Sally he had received audiocassettes from the Songhai ministry and had prayed to receive Christ as his personal Savior. "When the sun came up and my heart awoke," Mamadou says, "I was praying again that Jesus would forgive me of my sins and take me on the correct road, and that 'Sally Biyo' would come today to answer more of my questions."

Standing along a tributary of the Niger River, Brad and Sally Womble bowed to pray with Mamadou, who, knowing the persecution he would face, decided to be baptized.

*Editor's note: Some names in this article have been changed for security reasons.*



**That all peoples  
may know Him**

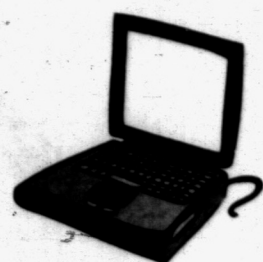
**Week of Prayer for  
International  
Missions  
and  
International  
Mission Study  
Dec. 3-10, 2006**

**Lottie Moon  
Christmas Offering\***

**National Goal:  
\$150 million**

**Our Goal:**





## GUEST OPINION



**Erich Bridges**  
IMB

By Erich Bridges  
International Mission Board

Could West Africa be won to Christ over a glass of sweet tea? Maybe, if you drink it with the right people: village chiefs, religious leaders, heads of family clans, young trailblazers of the future.

That's exactly what some Southern Baptist missionaries in West Africa are doing. Several people groups in the region savor an elaborate tea ceremony called "warga." The host brews and serves progressive rounds of strong, hot tea to guests. Each glass gets sweeter, symbolizing the growth of friendship. Friendship opens ears and hearts.

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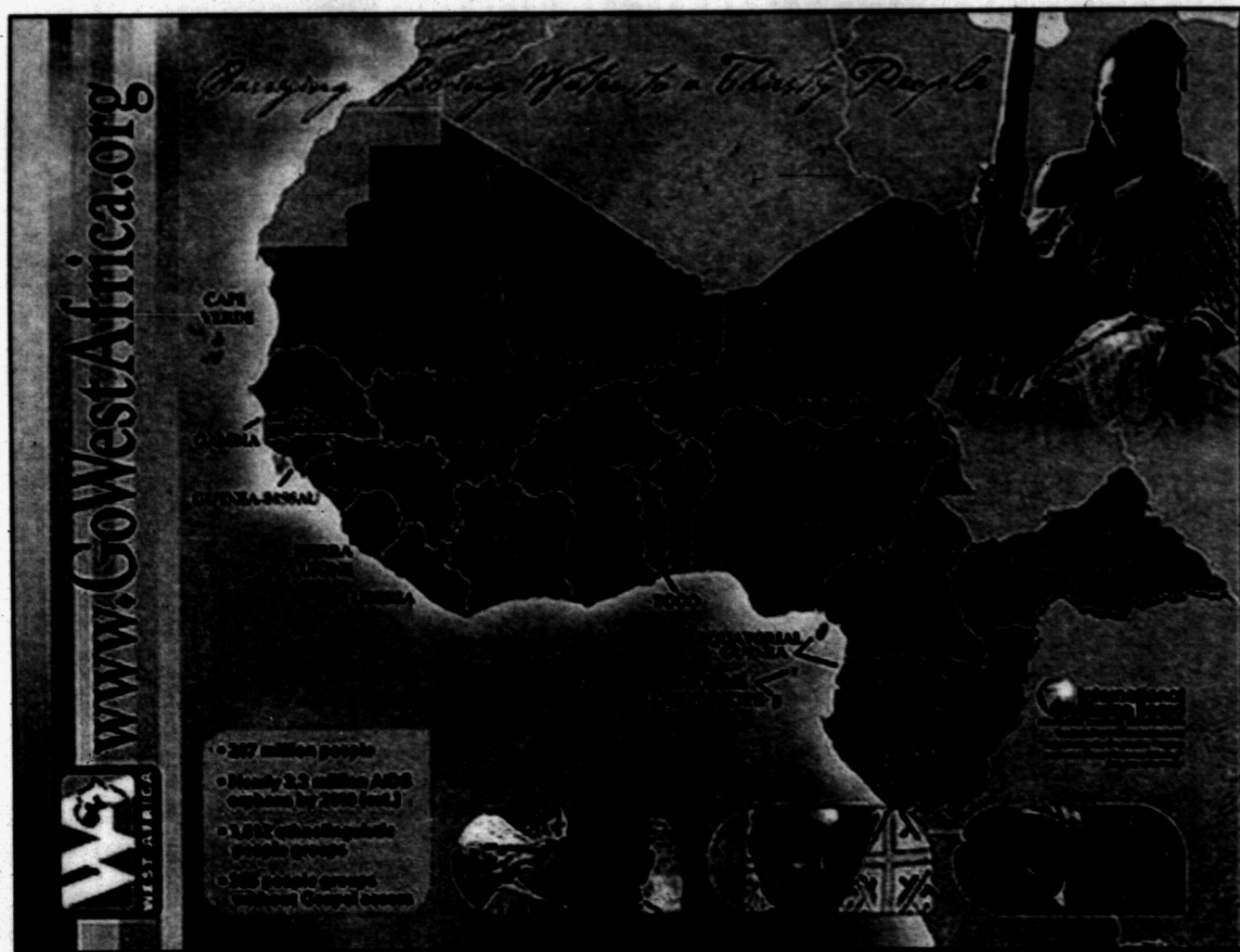
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# Yearning for Living Water



**Living Water**  
The 287 million other people of West Africa thirst for something far sweeter than tea. They yearn for Living Water.

"God has created a people here who want to worship Him," says Randy Arnett, International Mission Board (IMB) regional leader for West Africa. "They just don't know it yet."

Arnett and other IMB missionaries in West Africa intend to tell them, but they can't do it without a major increase in participation by Southern Baptists. The IMB has set aside all of 2006 to focus on reaching West Africa with the Gospel.

The challenge of West Africa:  
• 1,612 people groups spread across 22 countries, nearly as large as the continental United States.

• More than 350 of those peoples have no access to the Gospel. Half of the region's population is unreached (less than two percent evangelical). IMB workers currently work among only 52 West African people groups.

• Half of the region's people are Muslim. About 40% of West Africans claim Christianity in some form. However, African traditional religions — animism (worship of nature and natural objects, such as trees

and animals), ancestor worship, fear of spirits, belief in charms and spells — permeate the area influencing both Muslims and Christians.

• Ethnic and social conflict, unstable governments, and poverty haunt many parts of West Africa. Malaria, AIDS, and other diseases are widespread. Life expectancy is under 50 years. Malnutrition is high; literacy is low. More than half of West Africans live on less than a dollar a day.

• Then there's the climate: hot and hotter. In some areas, high humidity makes it hard to function. In others, drought parches the land.

"It's dry, dirty, and hot," Arnett freely admits of the region he loves. "It's not a tourist destination. If you want five-star hotels, air conditioning and a McDonald's on every corner, this isn't the place for you but we have God-called men and women who have said, 'I will forsake the comforts and securi-

ty of America, and I will come and live in this environment.'"

### Reclaiming West Africa

Some say the unreached peoples of West Africa will never be reached. They're wrong.

"They said Muslims would never listen," reports a missionary prayer update from Guinea-Bissau, "(but) Muslim villages are crying out for Jesus Christ. Village chiefs are requesting pastors, missionaries, or laymen to come and teach them about Jesus. Muslims are taking the 'JESUS' film to their villages because there aren't enough believers willing to go themselves."

In Senegal, a missionary answered a knock at his gate and found a Muslim imam (worship leader) standing there.

"I was told to come to you because of what I've been hearing (about Jesus) on the radio," the imam said. "I've been listening for 10 years, and I believe Jesus is the Son of God. What am I supposed to do about it?"

Today he's telling people the chronological Bible stories designed for Muslim listeners seeking truth. "We are going to reclaim West Africa for Jesus Christ," says Randy Arnett, the International Mission Board's regional leader.

IMB missionaries in West Africa have three main strategies:

• **Engaging** — Contacting and beginning work among unengaged peoples who have no access to the Gospel. Southern

Baptist volunteers and churches will play an increasingly important role in this effort.

• **Advancing** — Helping missionaries and local believers effectively evangelize and disciple engaged people groups, setting the stage for church-planting movements.

• **Co-partnering** — Relating and cooperating strategically with national Baptist partners at every level.

### Volunteers needed

IMB missionaries are looking for more God-called men and women to join them in reaching the big, "pivotal" people groups of the region who can, in turn, reach others. They're looking for thousands of Southern Baptist volunteers and they're looking for hundreds of churches willing to take on the strategic challenge of locating the many "micropeoples," populations of 15,000 or less, and sharing Jesus with them.

The IMB's missions team in West Africa needs your prayers, your commitment, your resources, and your church to help.

The IMB set aside all of 2006 to focus on reaching West Africa with the Gospel. That is the focus of this year's Week of Prayer for International Missions.

"God wants to do something here that we've never, ever seen before: an awakening, a revival, a spiritual breakthrough that will impact the world," Arnett says. "He's waiting on us."

For resources and information on praying for the peoples of West Africa, serving there as a missionary or volunteer, or strategically involving your church, visit [GoWestAfrica.org](http://GoWestAfrica.org).

**Week of Prayer for  
International Missions  
and  
International Mission Study**  
Dec. 3-10, 2006

**Lottie Moon  
Christmas Offering®**

National Goal: \$150 million

Our Goal: \_\_\_\_\_



[ime.imb.org](http://ime.imb.org)





# Bradfords answer God's call to W. Africa



**WARGA WITNESS** — Missionary Scott Bradford joins a friend for a traditional African tea ceremony known as "warga." The two-hour ceremony takes place three times a day and consists of three rounds of tea, each progressively sweeter than the next. (IMB photo)

SENEGAL, West Africa — Missionaries usually invite churches to send volunteers to help reach their people group. For Scott and Julie Bradford, missionary strategy coordinators for the Fulakunda (pronounced FOO-luh-KOON-duh) people of West Africa, it happened the other way around.

The Bradfords sensed God's mission call a decade before they arrived in 2002. West Africa, however, was "the last place in the world" they thought they would serve — but Conowingo (Md.) Church, a congregation that had been praying for years for the Fulakunda as well as sending volunteers and mobilizing other churches to go, was asking God to raise up long-term missionaries.

God's answer to that request: the Bradfords. "We were willing to go anytime, anywhere, but God said, 'Wait,'" Scott recalls.

While they waited, however, he got a little too comfortable teaching at a Christian school in the United States. "When the time came, God had to wake me up," he admits. "Julie woke up first, though."

Now, as missionaries, they welcome volunteers from Conowingo and other Southern Baptist churches who come to serve among the Fulakunda people.

The Fulakunda, who number more than two million in Senegal and four other West

African countries, traditionally were nomadic herdsman. In recent times, though, many have settled into towns and villages, primarily in Guinea Bissau and in southern Senegal, where the Bradfords now live.

They are overwhelmingly Muslim with a strong mixture of animism (worship of nature and natural objects, such as trees and animals), and superstition. Local religious leaders, tribal traditions, and fear of evil spirits dominate the spiritual landscape. Fewer than 50 Fulakunda people follow Jesus Christ as Lord, Scott estimates.

Too big a task? Not for God. "If any major people group here develops a church-planting movement, it will spread like wildfire across West Africa, because all the peoples are so interconnected," Scott predicts.

The spark for that wildfire just might be the Fulakunda, one of many subgroups of the Fulani peoples of West Africa. The Fulani number some 30 million.

Young Fulakunda men are more willing to listen to new ideas. Older men, steeped in Islam and tradition, are harder to reach. As members of a primarily oral culture, however, most Fulakunda love stories.

It might be the guys who hang out in front of the shop across the street from the house where Scott and Julie live with their three children; or the young soccer star who is helping

Scott learn Pular, the language spoken by the Fulakunda people; or elders sitting around the fire in a Fulakunda village.

Deep down, they all hunger for the truth about God. Scott is eager to teach it. "We sit down, we tell a story from the Bible and then we ask questions about the story," he says. "What does it teach us? What does it show us about God's character?"

The key is to tailor those stories to the opportunity and the audience. Scott calls it "situational evangelism."

"A situation comes up, and you run with it to the Word of God," he explains. "Anytime

you're talking about the Word of God, people nearby listen, and you're going to draw a crowd."

Scott and Julie want other Southern Baptists to join them — new missionaries, volunteers, partner churches, prayer supporters.

"It's going to take people in the United States praying for us, giving to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, being willing to come out and join us, because we can't do it on our own," Scott says. "We are called to be on mission with God and join Him where He is working."

God is working among the Fulakunda.

## Looking back

10 years ago

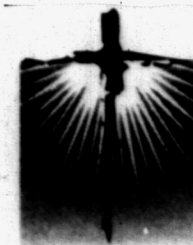
The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board appoints 51 missionaries at First Church, Jackson, in an emotional commissioning service that included a year in which the FMB sent 587 new missionaries around the world.

20 years ago

The SBC Peace Committee adopts two statements — on theology and denominational politics — during an intense 10th meeting. Chairman Charles Fuller says the two statements "form the basis for reconciliation" after more than seven years of controversy.

60 years ago

The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board approves creation of an advisory committee for The Baptist Record. Named to the committee are Norman W. Cox, J.D. Franks, Webb Brame, W.L. Day, Joe T. Odle, C.B. Hamlett III, and E.D. Hurst.



MISSISSIPPI  
BAPTISTS

## THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

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Week of Prayer for  
International Missions  
and  
International Mission Study  
Dec. 3-10, 2006

Lottie Moon Christmas Offering®  
National Goal: \$150 million  
Our Goal: \_\_\_\_\_



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#### YOU CAN RESPOND RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer  
with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you.  
(*I have sinned.*)
2. I want forgiveness for my  
sins and freedom from eternal  
death. (*I repent.*)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose  
from the grave to forgive my  
sins and to restore my rela-  
tionship with you.  
(*I believe in Jesus.*)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus  
Christ into my life. From this  
time on, I want to live in a lov-  
ing relationship with Him. (*I  
receive Christ as my Savior  
and Lord.*)

"But as many as received him,  
to them he gave the right to become  
children of God, even to those who  
believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for  
Jesus Christ today, contact a  
local Baptist church for spiritu-  
al guidance.

#### GREETING THE BRETHREN WITH A HOLY ELBOW BUMP

With the bird flu fear still lurking out there somewhere and the common old flu on the rise, more and more people are concerned about the spread of winter diseases and how to avoid contamination. One of the things that some people are already beginning to practice is to avoid shaking hands. With the holidays here most of us are around crowds of folks at church, at parties, or just while shopping. One of the most significant ways to communicate disease from one person to another is through the common courtesy of shaking hands. It is such a significant part of our culture that we can hardly do without it, but the World Health Organization is suggesting that we might just touch elbows. I'm not kidding, and I do not think they are in light of the fact that we are social creatures and in light of the growing possibility of a pandemic.

The biblical instruction is for us to greet the brethren with a holy kiss, and though I know very few people who practice that expression I suppose it will become even less popular. It is interesting to think about how the cultural shift has taken place from expressing love, care, and camaraderie from a kiss on the cheek to being filled with germ phobia. I suppose we have moved from greeting the brothers with a holy kiss to



## Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

the warm greeting of the right hand of fellowship in a handshake to the elbow bump of the brothers and sisters so that we can avoid spreading the bird flu. If you would, permit me to make a few observations about this whole fearful situation.

To begin with I would point out that the intent of Scripture and the instruction of the Word is that we are to have warm and loving fellowships that are expressed caringly and openly. Sometimes in our churches people shake hands, and you can almost visibly see that they are doing it because it is a social custom and not because they genuinely care about each other. If your heart is not right with your brothers and sisters, it does not matter if you kiss them, shake their hands, or bump elbows. It is not real and it will come across as empty and disingenuous. On the other hand authentic concern can often be conveyed in a warm smile.

Have you ever shopped at a store and when you checkout the cashiers have been instructed and, in fact, been command-

ed to say, "Thank you for shopping at —" and named their store? After saying that about a thousand times and saying it to a number of folks that they probably wish would shop somewhere else it begins to have an empty ring. Though the words remain the same, it is obvious that they don't give a rip where you shop. Sometimes we seem to do the same thing in our churches when we have our welcome to visitors' time and encourage everybody to shake hands with people around them. I have been in churches where when I came in and they did not know who I was they would not even speak. Yet when the "welcome the people around you moment" came they were all smiles, warm, and friendly. It leaves something to be desired when that happens.

Another point I would like to make is that it is probably of greater value to trust God to protect you during flu season than it is just to avoid a kiss, handshake, or an elbow bump. Folks, unless you are going to

live in a sterilized environmental bubble and never go anywhere, do anything, or see anybody, you have a good chance of being exposed to whatever it is that is going around. Somebody nearby can sneeze or cough or you can turn a door-knob or touch a desktop and the bug could be there. Even if you don't go around anybody who is sick or touch anything without immediately washing your hands, it is a fairly good possibility that your kids are going to bring in whatever it is that is going around.

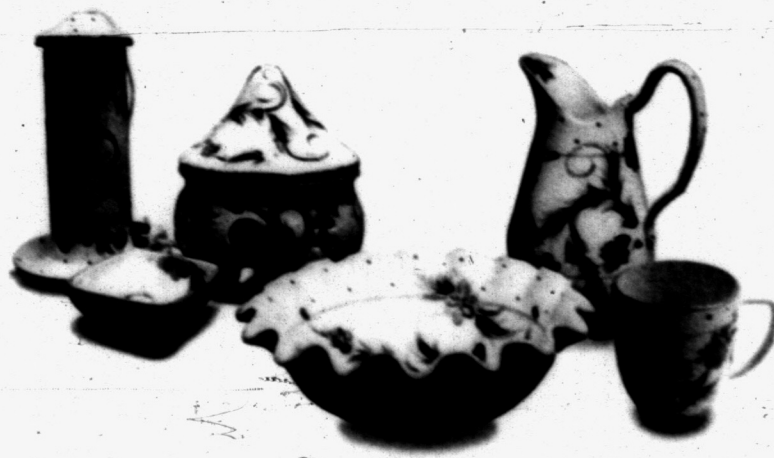
Wisdom would lead us to take care of ourselves, try to have our immune systems in as good a condition as possible, and avoid walking right into contaminated areas. Even doing all of that, you just have to trust the Lord to take care of you through many of the unseen and scary things of life. He does see, He does care, and He can provide and protect.

A final thought that I would pass along in an attempt to merge the ideas and keep a balance in life. As important as it is to stay away from sickness, disease, and bird flu, it is equally as important to maintain healthy, good, and helpful relationships. So stay healthy and in a positive and good way give a friend an uplifting and holy elbow bump.

The author may be contacted at  
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What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

# HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

December 7, 2006

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.

## Senior Adult 3rd Annual EVANGELISM RALLY

Tuesday, January 23, 2007 • 8:00 - 11:45 a.m.

Pinelake Baptist Church, Brandon

8:00 a.m.

Registration

8:45 a.m.

General Assembly

9:00 a.m.

Break-Outs:

One Won 1 (Seniors Reaching Seniors)

Sonny Adkins, former State Evangelism

Director, pastor of New Hebron BC

Experiencing Evangelism Through Your Spiritual Gifts

(How to Rewire!) - Ferris Jordan, former professor of NOBTS

and co-author, "Grandparenting by Grace," Baton Rouge, La.

When Senior Adults Pray!

Evelyn Williams, volunteer, Miss. wMu;

State Prayer Advocate; Hickory, Miss.

Motivating Leaders to Reach Boomers/Adapters

Larry Mizell, former Senior Consultant with LifeWay

(Chautauquas), Franklin, Tenn.

10:00 a.m.

Break (Host: MS Baptist Foundation)

10:30 a.m.

Worship Rally

Music - Richard "Dick" Baker, former chairman

of Music Missions and Evangelism at Southwestern

Seminary; noted for songs such as: "Here Is My Life,"

McKinney, Texas

Speaker - Bo Baker has worked in evangelism for over

45 years and has written the words to over 100 songs

and hymns.

McKinney, Texas

11:45 a.m.

Adjourn

Dick  
Baker

Bo  
Baker



## Are Your Ducks In A Row



## Regarding Your Last Will and Testament?

You can call 800-748-1652 or 601-292-3210 or write:

MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST FOUNDATION

P. O. Box 530

Jackson, MS 39205

or fax us at 601-968-968-0904.

## "MAKE YOUR WILL MONTH"

is the emphasis we  
use annually in

January across the  
Southern Baptist

Convention to create  
an awareness of

preparing a will. A  
bulletin insert, "Are

Your Ducks In A Row  
Regarding Your Last

Will and Testament?",  
is available. If you

are willing to help us  
promote the impor-

tance of a Will by  
using the bulletin

insert, just let us  
know how many to

send to your church.

## 2007 Deacon Ministry Emphasis

*is a plan with specific actions  
that highlight deacon ministries  
and involve deacon training  
and service.*

### The Purpose Of Deacon Emphasis Is To:

- Focus on their biblical role
- Build team relationships
- Secure involvement in ministries
- Develop skills for ministry

For more info, contact Kay McDonnell at 1-800-748-1651,  
601-292-3305 or kmcdonnell@mbcb.org

## SINGLE-SINGLE AGAIN CONFERENCE

"Spiritual Renewal"

Saturday, January 27

FBC, Brookhaven (601-833-8111)

9:00 a.m. until noon \$10.00 includes lunch

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Dave Edwards, OK  
Well-known speaker and author

### BREAK-OUTS:

"When Life Needs Rewinding", Dave Edwards  
"Picking up the Pieces - Forgiveness/Grief/Divorce"  
Miss Chocolate, Gwen Williams, Picayune

### PLUS:

Refreshments, materials from LifeWay, and displays  
Sponsored by: Lincoln Baptist Assn/MBCB





**January 15**

**CAMP GARAYWA, CLINTON**

**Clarence Cooper**

Pastor  
Emmanuel Baptist Church  
Grenada

**January 16**

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, WIGGINS**

**Dean Register**

Pastor  
Temple Baptist Church  
Hattiesburg

**January 18**

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, OXFORD**

**Gary Richardson**

Pastor  
North Oxford Baptist Church  
Oxford

**9 a.m.**

**til noon**

**COST: \$10**

per participant for  
preview and brunch

**PREREGISTRATION  
REQUESTED**

Send \$10 per person along with the  
names and church name, and indi-  
cate which of these three locations  
you plan to attend.

Send preregistration to:

MBCB  
Discipleship & Family Ministry  
PO Box 530  
Jackson MS 39205

**QUESTIONS?**

Call

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or

601-292-3284

or E-mail

dbrashier@mbcb.org

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# Evangelism

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**Pinelake Baptist Church**

**Brandon, Mississippi**

**Low Leventhal**  
**Illusions and Reality**  
**Canada**

**"ACTS 1:8 OBEYING HIS COMMAND"**

**Starting Times:**

Sunday — 5:00 p.m.

Monday — 9:15 a.m.

Tuesday — 8:00 a.m.

## SINGLE LIFE CONFERENCES

(No cost)

**Thursday, February 1**  
**Tate Baptist Church, Corinth**

(662-286-2935)

**Singleness with a Purpose**

Glenn Shows, MBCB, Jackson

**Single-Parenting**

Dwight Faulkenberry, Fulton  
Pathway Counseling Ministries

6:30 p.m. — "Bar-b-que Supper"

Adjourn — 8:30 p.m.

**Thursday, March 1**  
**FBC, Grenada**

(662-226-3661)

**Experiencing Forgiveness**

Becky Brown

recording artist

and author, Raymond

**"One-Won-1"**

**(Single Reaching Single)**

Glenn Shows, MBCB, Jackson

6:30 p.m. — Baked Potato/Chili  
Supper

Adjourn — 8:30 p.m.

**Tuesday, March 6**  
**Easthaven Baptist Church**  
**Brookhaven**

(601-833-2597)

**Singleness with a Purpose**

Becky Brown, Raymond

**"One-Won-1"**

**(Singles Reaching Singles)**

Don Lum, director, Evangelism Department  
MBCB, Jackson

6:30 p.m. — Chili Supper

Adjourn — 8:30 p.m.

**Tuesday, March 20**  
**FBC, Kosciusko**

(662-289-5575)



# OLDER CHILDREN'S Bible Drill Camp 2007

## July 5-7

### Central Hills Baptist Retreat

**For all Boys and Girls in  
your church who have  
completed Grades 3-6**

**Cost \$95** with \$50 deposit  
due with pre-registration

#### Camp activities include:

Bible Study, Bible Memorization,  
Bible Skill Worship, Camp Fire  
Service, Morning Watch, Time  
with Southern Baptist Missionaries,  
Horseback Riding, Rifle Range  
[safety/marksmanship],  
Swimming, Canoeing, 4 square

Each church group must have a male coun-  
selor for every 7 boys (or portion thereof) and  
a female counselor for every 7 girls (or por-  
tion thereof). Children are together with the  
counselors from their church all during camp.

Camp begins with check-in at 2 pm,  
Thursday, July 5, 2007 and ends at noon on  
Saturday, July 7.

#### Registration Form

Pre-registration with deposits must be mailed to Central Hills before reservations  
can be confirmed. Medical forms and other registration forms supplied by  
Central Hills must be on file at the camp for each camper before campers can be  
admitted to camp.

Church: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Day time phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Leader accompanying children and other counselors to camp: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of reservations: Female \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_ = Total \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this form to: Rev. Jim Ray, manager, Central Hills Baptist Retreat, P.O. Box 698,  
Kosciusko, MS 39090 • Phone (662) 289-9730

Programs questions should be directed to the Discipleship and Family Ministry  
Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board — 1-800-748-1651 or  
dbrashier@mbcb.org.

Mississippi Baptist Convention Board • P.O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • www.mbcb.org

# POWER 1:08

YOUTH EVANGELISM CONFERENCE

December 28-29

#### SCHEDULE:

Registration begins at 1 p.m.  
First Session starts at 2 p.m.  
Concludes Friday at 4 p.m.

For more info, contact Harvey Ellis or Beverly Bridges at 1-800-748-1651 or 601-968-3800





Pray this day for...

December 8, 2006-January 11, 2007

Prayer Ministry Office • P.O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 601-292-3304 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-7729 (PRAY)

'It is in loving, not in being loved the heart is blessed.'

## GUIDEPOSTS

Rob Nelson is a Marine chaplain. Pray for his unit currently deployed in Iraq. They have suffered eight being killed and 47 being wounded in 45 days in combat. Though they are very tired, praise the Lord, many are turning or returning to faith as an anchor in these difficult times. Please keep praying for our troops.

A North African's worker's car was broken into last month in Belgium. Although only the radio was stolen, the robbery was stressful and involved lots of bureaucracy. Pray for peace for the worker. Also pray that the robber(s) will recognize that the theft was wrong and could be dangerous. May he turn away from that lifestyle.

The Nagua team (Dominican Republic) asks you to pray for: the starting of a new work in the neighborhood of P; that the family that has already studied the Bible with us a few times will open their home and host a Bible study; that this family will be a good witness to their neighbors and will reject all beliefs that are not biblical.

Journeyman Nate Schoen has been working with a group of students in Mozambique and Tanzania. Join Nate in praising God for this work, and pray that the students will have a desire to share the Word they are learning with others.

Two college students serving as earthquake relief volunteers were in a building shelter where they had the opportunity to share the gospel with village leaders. Later they asked their driver what he thought about the things they had shared. He said, 'It is all right and true.' They asked if he would like to follow Jesus. He said 'Yes.' He prayed right there, and made that commitment.

For: (1) MBCB alumni staff annual Christmas luncheon, 12-11-06; (2) Ask the Lord to provide adequate rains among the Sukuma of Tanzania. Ask the Holy Spirit to speak to the hearts of believers to remind them that the Lord desires for people to call upon Him for every need and that He delights to hear them ask for things.

A missionary asks prayers for: opportunities to share the gospel with friends and neighbors; that their eyes be opened to the gospel of grace that they might come to repentance; that many will attend and enjoy a handcraft meeting and desire to continue to meet; that they will have spiritual interests and desire to read the Bible together.

Christmas Day - Pray that all Christians will celebrate Christmas in a Christian way so that more people will understand the true meaning of Christmas.

### JANUARY 2007

New Year's Day - Pray that in 2007 the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan will stop and that each country can have an efficient and functional government.

Pray for a local church that our team is working with that is seeking to transform four children's Bible clubs into new house churches. writes the Northwest Mexico City Team. Pray for willing, Spirit-filled workers to be trained and used of the Lord. Pray for adults in these communities to become believers and faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

Many ethnic-minority people in China still do not have a copy of God's Holy Word in a language they can read. Pray for all working on Bible translations, asking God to strengthen them and give them wisdom. Pray that doors will be open so God's Word can go forth to all of the 400 plus people groups in China.

Pray that God will be working in the hearts of the Neluza Berber people of Libya this month during the new gospel radio broadcasts. Pray for the first Neluza Berber believer to be found and disciples.

Biserica Baptista Haili (Grace Baptist Church) in Bucharest, Romania began going through a time of transition in late September as it moved into its own facility. The church has been anxiously awaiting the opportunity to be finally in the middle of the neighborhood of 300,000 souls for whom it is the only evangelical witness.

The Kai of Thailand write: Please pray for the many volunteer teams that are coming to this land during this time. Ask that they will be used effectively to communicate the gospel. Pray that they will have opportunities to see fruit from their labor.

Pray for missionary apprentices Brad and Cassie White with the Southern Conchucos Outreach Team in Chinwin and San Marcos, Peru. They will be doing follow up work after an evangelistic medical clinic in those towns held in October. Pray that some of the new contacts will desire to open their homes and hearts to the Word of God.

The Ghana Baptist Convention of West Africa had their annual meeting in August, and elected two men as president and vice-president. Pray for Rev. S. and Dr. N. as they begin their terms of office. Their first goal is to establish a prayer office. Ask the Lord to continue to lead them and to give them grace and boldness to lead.

Pray for the Makatala Baptist Church near the shore of Lake Malawi. Petition that they will be a beacon of Good News to the community around them and that they will faithfully reach out to the lost and provide discipleship for new believers. This is among Chewa-speaking Ngoni of Malawi and Mozambique.

Pastor D, a young man from northern Ghana who is the pastor of a small group of believers from his ethnic group, the Frafra people. Recently Pastor D and an BMB missionary took a 'vision walk' and discovered many Frafra interested in the gospel. Pray for Pastor D and his church members as they continue to reach out to their people with the gospel.

Pray for the Tibetan artist in Ladakh of Northern India who is painting pictures to go along with Bible stories. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide him in his painting so that the paintings will speak in culturally appropriate ways and aid in understanding Scripture, and pray that as he works on the stories, his eyes will be opened to the One of whom he paints.

Female believers comprise about 70% of the church membership in China. Please take a moment today to thank God for each woman who is serving God faithfully in churches across China. Pray that the ranks of male believers will increase greatly and that growing numbers of men will join these sisters in serving God through involvement in His Body.

International Service Corp workers David and Cheryl Johnson recently moved from Dakar to Lehou to develop a former journeyman's work among the Lehou people of Senegal. Pray for God's wisdom and direction as they reorganize and start. Also, pray that the congregation of the Lehou Team will stay in complete obedience to God's leading.

Pray for D, a university student who prayed to receive Christ last month in her dorm room in Morogoro, Tanzania. She has been an off-and-on member of our Bible study. She is pregnant, and praying for discernment and God's grace in regard to what God wants her to do about the young man who wants to marry her.

For: (1) YEC Challenge: Mississippi College, 28th - 29th (Youth Ministry); (2) Many local believers in Yichang, China are about to tell others about Christ. They told her husband who became angry with her. Others have told their family members about their newfound joy in Jesus. Pray that their trust in God will grow and their entire families will believe.

Robert Wheatley is the associate pastor of First Southern Baptist Church of Red Bluff, CA. The church is concluding a God sized year with baptisms and great growth in the church. Pray for God's wisdom, direction, and unity as the church calls a new pastor (the current pastor is retiring).

Pray for the David Dean Mission House which is at the center of Baptist outreach in New York City. Lift up Jack and Becky Snyder, MSC missionaries, as they host the people coming from churches all over the U.S. for the missions opportunities - 700 so far this year. Pray that the efforts of these volunteers will touch many heads for the Lord.

Pray for the "Gaanman," the head chief of the Aukan people of Suriname and French Guiana, and for the Captains, the leaders of each village. Pray that they will come to know Christ as their Savior and that they will open up their villages for church starts.

Team Topic of Nayarit, Mexico, writes: "A recent college graduate, T is a strong Christian who has helped us gain access to the university campus. She desires to follow the Lord as a short-term missionary. Pray for T's faith to increase and ask for God's leading in her life over the next few months.

For: (1) MBCB Staff Christmas luncheon, 12-15-06 at 11:30 am in the Sky Room; (2) Following the month of fasting is a traditional time for meditation by the GO-LAND PEOPLE OF THE PACIFIC RIM. Workers have a long list of open homes and open hearts to visit. Pray for eternal impact for the kingdom.

Sixteen-year-old K had to quit school last year to work and support his family. No father is in the home and his mother is blind. Several months ago K joined Mr. Y for worship and fellowship. He heard Christ that day and was baptized. K is one of two new believers in the sixth generation of church planting movement in Togane, Japan.

Baptist pastors in Bratislava, Slovakia meet again in for a once a month study of what it means to be the church of Jesus Christ. Pray that local Baptist churches will commit to making disciples and reaching out to the lost. Pray for Third Baptist Church and their pastors, T and M. Pray for church leadership to be granted guidance from the Holy Spirit.

"We've been taught there is no god. How do you know God exists?" the student at Yichang, China asked. "How do you know He doesn't?" I responded. "Like the wind, you can't see it, but you can see the effects of its passing. God Himself is not seen, but His workings in the world are obvious: the complexity of creation, the vastness of the universe, etc. God exists!"

Glenia Heidt, prayer consultant for the Canadian Convention of Southern Baptists, reports that the Discovery Church in Regina, Saskatchewan, praises God for their new pastor Richard Grimes. Pray for God's wisdom and direction as they reorganize and that the congregation will have new hope, new faith, and seek God's direction.

Pray that people in the Maldivian Islands who have not heard the gospel of Jesus Christ will hear His name proclaimed this month. Pray that the shores of each Maldivian island witness and be glad for the Lord's sovereignty and reign.

Several young churches in Botswana are beginning to get excited about reaching out to neighboring communities with the gospel. Pray that they will be faithful witnesses and that their desire to share the Good News will continue to grow!

The one million Zaramo people of Eastern Africa struggle to survive. For hundreds of years they have held tightly to Islam and their Islamic identity. Less than 2% are Christian. Ask the Holy Spirit to challenge Zaramo traditions and beliefs and to open their hearts to Truth. Pray for believers to share actively the Good News with the Zaramo.

FOR SECURITY, cards will be forwarded. Please send all to:  
Child's name,  
Parent's name,  
MBCB wMu MK Birthdays,  
PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205

PLEASE NOTE: Church members may send a package of cards together; cards do not have to be sent individually to the wMu.

2/1/04

MR. JOSHUA A. SCHMITZ  
Parents: Burton & Suzanne  
General Evangelism  
West Africa

2/12/02

MISS ALICE A. MULLINS  
Parents: Frank & Lynn  
Church Planting, Western Europe

2/12/03

MISS REBEKAH J. SCHMITZ  
Parents: Burton & Suzanne  
General Evangelism, West Africa

2/16/01

MR. HADDON BEDSOE  
Parents: David & Laurie  
General Evangelism  
Eastern South America

2/20/88

MISS KATY HORTON  
Parents: Francis &  
Angie Horton  
Last Frontier

2/24/00

MR. NATHAN PEACOCK  
Parents: Kevin & Brenda  
Theological Education  
Middle America



FEBRUARY

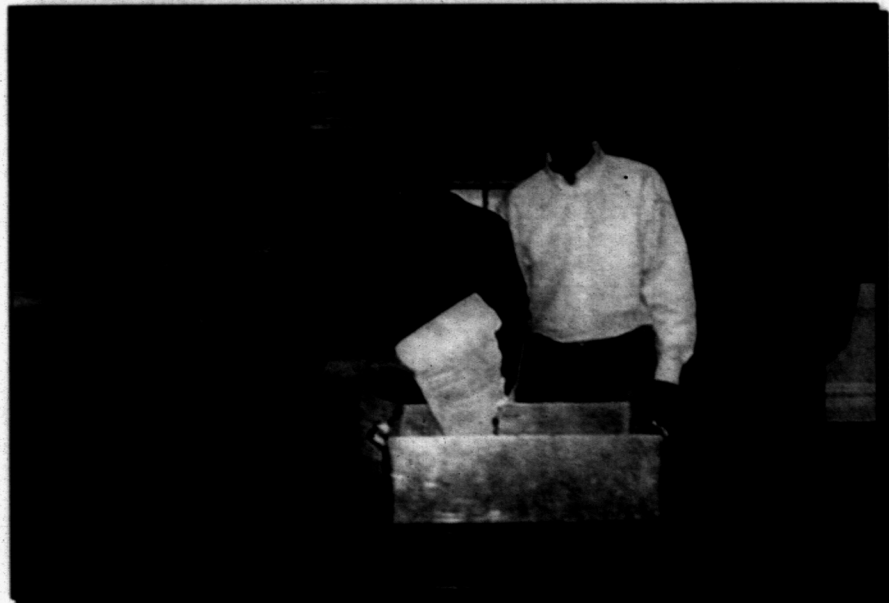
# HOUSE TOPS



## JUST FOR THE RECORD



1. Acteens Host Tea for wMu, Evergreen Church, Louisville



2. Noteburning Ceremony, Bethel Church, Lawrence Association



3. Angel Choir, Lakeshore Church, Jackson



4. Deacon Ordination, Fellowship Church, Meridian

1. The Acteens of Evergreen Church, Louisville, hosted a tea for the WMU Nov. 26. Shown are the participants.

2. Bethel Church, Lawrence Association, burned the note on their sanctuary renovation loan Nov. 19. Shown are Donna Nichols, Kevin Rayborn, Tim Morrison, David Oliver, and Michael Rushing.

3. Lakeshore Church, Jackson, will present their Christmas cantata Dec. 10, 10:30 a.m., and their live nativity scene Dec. 15-16, 6-8 p.m. Shown is the angel choir from the nativity scene.

4. Fellowship Church, Meridian, ordained Andrew Post as deacon Oct. 15. Shown are Post and pastor Jimmy Williams.

5. Fifteenth Avenue Church, Meridian, recently held its 10th annual ladies' retreat, Project Runway, a study of Romans 12:1-3. Shown are some of the participants.

6. Pearson Church, Pearl, recent sponsored a For Ladies Only fellowship, themed I Am a Princess — a child of the King. Over 60 ladies attended the event. Shown is a collage of the participants.

7. The Young at Heart group of First Church, Foxworth, recently went on a fall trip through the Blue Ridge Parkway, stopping in Hendersonville, Asheville, Chimney Rock, and Pigeon Forge. Shown are the participants.

8. Grace Church, Philadelphia, prepared and sent 107 shoe boxes to the Samaritan's Purse shoe-box ministry.



5. Ladies' Retreat Participants, Fifteenth Avenue Church, Meridian



6. For Ladies Only Fellowship, Pearson Church, Pearl



7. Young at Heart Group, First Church, Foxworth

### COLLEGE NEWS

1. The annual Bobby Halford Holiday Baseball Camp for youth ages 7-17 will be conducted Dec. 27-29 on the William Carey University campus in Hattiesburg. Hours are 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Dec. 27-28, and 9 a.m.-noon Dec. 29. Cost is \$95, which includes meals and camp T-shirt. For more information, call (601) 318-6110, (601) 318-6192, write Bobby Halford Baseball Camp, William Carey University, 498 Tuscan Ave., Hattiesburg, MS 39401, or email bhalford@wmcarey.edu.

2. The Joseph and Nancy Fail School of Nursing at William Carey University was awarded a \$1 million grant from the Asbury Foundation of Hattiesburg. The grant will be used to construct an addition onto the existing nursing building located on the Hattiesburg campus. Most recently the WCU nursing program's Sigma Theta Tau International chapter charter was approved. The Honor Society of Nursing, STI provides leadership and scholarship in practice, education and research to enhance the health of all people. Carey operated as an Honor Society since 2003 and met the rigorous requirements for an official chapter in 2006.

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FSV XSFT VGL LG WT  
FUVUOLTKTY JVLG, WJL  
LG FUVUOLTK, SVY LG  
AAPT BUO EUZL S  
KSVOGF ZGK FSVN.

FSKD LTV: ZGKLN-ZUPT

Clue: F = M

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: John Seven: Seven.

## MS POSITIONS

**THE METRO BAPTIST ASSOCIATION** is seeking resumes for the position of Associational Missions Director. Metro Association comprises Hinds and Madison counties. MBA has 82 churches and over 70,000 members. Resumes may be sent to: Search Committee; 6530 Dogwood View Parkway; Jackson, MS 39213. Deadline for receiving resumes is March 1, 2007.

**PROVIDENCE BAPTIST CHURCH**, Jayess, Miss., is seeking a part-time music director. Contact pastor Ron Satterwhite at (601) 823-0358.

**NORTHCREST BAPTIST CHURCH**, Meridian, Miss., accepting resumes for a

minister of youth. Send to Northcrest Baptist Church, P.O. Box 3159, Meridian, MS 39303.

**BETHESDA BAPTIST CHURCH, TERRY, Miss.**, is accepting resumes for a Part-time secretary. Job Description for this position is as follows: basic church office duties (phone and computer skills), and some financial tasks will be included. Please send resume to: Bethesda Baptist Church, Attention: Personnel Committee, 13628 Midway Road, Terry, MS 39170.

**PART-TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC** in the Collins, Miss. area. A BA is preferred. Contact Jo Lyn at (601) 765-8033.

## CLASSIFIED ADS

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## JUST FOR THE RECORD



9. Youth Missions Organizations, Mt. Pisgah Church, Carroll County

9. The youth missions organizations of **Mt. Pisgah Church, Carroll County**, recently collected food items for World Hunger Day. Shown are the participants.

10. **First Church, Polkville**, will have its children's Christmas cantata Dec. 10, 11 a.m., the Music Barn Band at 6 p.m., and the adult Christmas cantata Dec. 17, 11 a.m.

11. **Escatawpa Church, Escatawpa**, will have its Christmas musical Dec. 17, 6 p.m., and a candlelight service and Lord's supper Dec. 24, 5 p.m.

12. **Tate Church, Corinth** will present a children's choir

program Dec. 10, 6 p.m.; an adult choir program Dec. 17, 6 p.m. and Dec. 18, 7 p.m.; Christmas Eve worship Dec. 24, 10 a.m., a candlelight Lord's supper Dec. 27, 6 p.m., and a New Year's Eve celebration Dec. 31, 7 p.m.

13. **Melissa Wise of New Henleyfield Church, Carriere**, was chosen as one of the top 100 finalists in the Sunday School Teacher of the Year Contest, sponsored by Christian Tools of Affirmation.

14. **Barbara Smith** was honored at the **Alcorn Association's** annual meeting for completing 25 years of service as ministry assistant.

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# BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

## Hope That Lives

1 Peter 1:3-13, 18-21

By Gloria Lofton

*The word which God has written on every brow is hope.*

— Victor Hugo

In last week's study we look at the life-changing gift of faith. This week we will be studying the life-changing gift of hope. Hope That Lives. You may ask; "What is the difference between faith and hope?" Faith is "the trustful human response to God's self revelation through His words and actions" and a "limited personal knowledge of God". (Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary, p.547). Hope is grounded in faith and is the outcome of faith. The definition of hope: "Truthful expectation, particularly with reference to the fulfillment of God's promises. Biblical hope is the anticipation of a favorable outcome under

God's guidance. More specifically, hope is the confidence that what God has done for us in the past guarantees our participation in what God will do in the future. This contrasts to the world's definition of hope as 'a feeling that what is wanted will happen'" (Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary, p. 780).

It is strongly believed that Peter may well have written this epistle from Rome about the time of the outbreak of the Neronian persecution in A.D. 64. He, himself, had already endured beating and had faced death at Herod's hands; therefore he is writing to encourage and strengthen his dear brethren in Asia to face the cruel Neronian persecution he could see coming upon them.

In 1 Peter 1:3-5, Peter is praising God who has caused them



Lofton

to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Because of this they can obtain an inheritance which will not perish, is unstained, will not fade away, and is kept under watch in heaven for them. To know this, his brethren would gain

comfort and joy, even though at present they were distressed by various trials.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the basis of our living Christian hope. Oh, what a marvelous assurance we who have Jesus as Savior have in knowing He has defeated the power of sin and death.

Do you know Jesus Christ as your Savior? If you have not as yet accepted the marvelous gift of salvation, or are unsure of your salvation, please search God's word and seek Him with all your heart, and He will give you this precious gift, then you too can have the gift of living hope. A hope and peace that passes all understanding.

In 1 Peter 1: 6-9 Peter is encouraging the believers to view their trials as a way to prove their faith was genuine. Hope goes beyond the testing of our faith. Despite our trials, we can rejoice in our eternal inheritance. Our trials are an instrument used by God to refine and strengthen our faith, therefore making us more useful to Him. God doesn't leave us alone. By His power we are protected and our salvation is secure.

Oh, my fellow Christians, how privileged we are to be the recipients of God's marvelous salvation. In verses 10-12 Peter tell us the prophets who prophesied of Christ and His sufferings searched diligently to find out more about the times and circumstances of Christ's suffering and His glory. They realized it was not for them that this would happen, but for the ones to come. In verse 12b it says "Even angels long to look into these things." "To look" here is in the Greek Parakupto, which means to bend beside, lean over (as to peer within): look into, stoop down. "To look" is also used in

the same way in John 20:5,11. Here, in verse 5, one of Jesus' disciples came to the tomb of Jesus and "stooping and looking in," he was in search of Jesus. Then in verse 11, Mary "stooped and looked" in search of Jesus. That which was looked and searched for by the Old Testament prophets and which astonished the angels is in the Christian's possession now. How much we should cherish our salvation.

In verse 13, Peter says, "Therefore, gird your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (NASB). By keeping our minds on things of God and doing His work on earth, we are less likely to stray from holy living. We must be steadfast in spreading the plan of salvation, so at Christ's appearing we will not be ashamed.

*A religious hope does not only bear up the mind under her sufferings, but makes her rejoice in them.* — Joseph Addison

Lofton is a member of Willow Grove Church, Collins.

# EXPLORE THE BIBLE

## Working with Confidence in God

Ezra 4:1-6:22

By Tim Alexander

The Remnant faced opposition from the beginning. The Samaritans opposed the Jews inhabiting Jerusalem and rebuilding the temple. Opposition and opportunity usually go together, and the greater the opportunity the greater the opposition. The apostle Paul stated, "Because a great door for effective work has opened to me, there are many who oppose me." 1 Cor. 6:9 (NIV)

### 1. Anticipate Frustrations, (Ezra 4:4-5)

The Samaritans had heard of the rebuilding project and wanted to join the Jews. They worshiped the same God as the Jews, so why not participate in rebuilding and later worship there? The Jews regarded the Samaritans as a mixed blood who would pollute the Jewish worship. They reminded the Samaritans that

King Cyrus had given the order to rebuild God's house to the Jews. "The people of the land," the Samaritans sought revenge by undermining the morale of the Temple builders. Their goal was to frustrate and discourage the efforts of the Jews.

In many countries today, Satan employs direct and overt opposition in God's work. In countries that enjoy religious freedom, the ways to hinder God's work are more subtle and indirect. Churches experience frustrations when they are active and seek to follow God's leadership. External oppositions are expressed in vandalism, political maneuvers, zoning petitions and the list goes on! Our greatest external adversary prowls like a lion, seeking someone he can devour. (1 Peter 5:8) Sadly, frustrations are also caused by internal opposition



Alexander

from church members more committed to their own concerns than to the Lord's work.

### 2. Follow divine guidance, (Ezra 4:24-5:5)

The temple construction had been halted for sixteen years and the people had a negative, defeatist attitude about work. Complaints the Samaritans voiced made the authority aware of their concerns. The Samaritans made haste to see that the Jews obeyed the king's command. At the same time the rebuilding of Jerusalem ceased, the reconstruction of the Temple came to a halt.

Regardless of the circumstances we find ourselves in, the Lord expects us to obey Him and persevere in the work he has called us to do. When I think of a Biblical character that endured hard times yet persevered, I think of the apostle Paul. He was shipwrecked, imprisoned, beaten and left for dead in Lysrta, yet persevered to the end. Paul fought the good fight and finished the

course. As ministers of the gospel we are all called to persevere. Jesus reminds us to deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow Him.

### 3. Expect God's Victory, (Ezra 6:8, 13-16)

Chapter six begins with King Darius asking the royal secretaries to search the archives for Cyrus' original decree. Darius wanted to know the original intent and wording of Cyrus' decree. The original decree gave the Jews the right to resume rebuilding the temple and even gave the limits of its dimension. Cyrus allowed large stones to be used for the walls and promised to pay from the royal treasury. He also ordered officials to provide beasts for daily sacrifices. Cyrus wanted the priest to pray for him and his family.

What started as an investigation ended as a royal decree. It was very clear that neither the Persian official nor the people of the land were to interfere with the rebuilding of the temple. King Darius made another decree that described the terrible judgment that would happen if someone disobeyed his decree.

In 515 B.C., about five and a half years after Haggai and Zachariah had called the people back to the rebuilding the Temple, the temple was completed! God is always faithful. He energized the people through the prophets' preaching and even used the wealth and authority of a pagan king to advance His kingdom.

Sometimes we forget we are in a battle; we should expect opposition in our Christian walk. The first century church had its share of opposition. As we get closer to the end of time, we too should expect opposition. Sometimes life is like rowing a boat upstream on the Mighty Mississippi River. The current of opposition is always there. In conclusion, may we always keep, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the same, set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:2)

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## Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted.



Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the **who, what, when, where** details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts

are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to crop-

ping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.



# Veterinarian uses work to share Gospel among Fulani

NIGERIA, West Africa — The Fulani herder grabs a large bull by its sharply pointed horns, and then, slipping one thumb in the animal's mouth, firmly rotates its head to the side and holds it. The sleek, white animal is hobbled, his tail twitching.

Yero passes a syringe to veterinarian Mike Houser, who makes the injection, then quickly pops the animal on the rump. The owner adds a red mark to its hide, and they move on.

Houser, a missionary with the International Mission Board (IMB), and his ministry partner, Yero, work in Kaduna state, Nigeria, treating animals. The two arrived at 8 a.m. They started with Yero's quiet prayer of blessing for the owners and their herds. Before noon they will be finished.

The Fulanis are pastoral nomads, much like the Old Testament patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

It is not unusual to see a white herd crossing a Nigerian road or rambling through a large pasture, followed by family members including tall, elegant women balancing cooking pots and bowls on their heads and one or two animals saddled with small tents.

"My grandfather used to say that the man without cows is a man without clothes," Yero says. "For the Fulani, his cattle are his gold."

At 18 million, the Fulani are the largest nomadic group in the world. Centuries ago, they converted to Islam. At the Fulani empire's height through the 1800s, they spread Islam throughout West Africa.

The reverse could happen. When the Fulani catch something, they hold onto it. Houser has prayerfully considered what might alter the spiritual course of the Fulani people.

He heard God say one day, "You get Nigerian Baptists to pray for the Fulani, and I will take care of the rest."

For three years, Houser has helped Nigerian Baptists focus on the Fulani during the month of prayer.

Mike Stonecypher, IMB liaison with the Nigerian Baptist Convention, calls this prayer emphasis "one of the most exciting things that I have seen happen in the convention."

What began with a ripple of awareness has spread as Nigerians began to "think beyond their tribal boundaries," observes Larry Taylor, IMB business facilitator in Nigeria. "Mike just ripped the covers off and said, 'Look, these are people who need Jesus. Go. Give. Do whatever it takes to reach the Fulani.'"

Houser's ministry partner Yero was himself a Fulani cattleman who picked up a Christian tract along the roadside. When he converted from Islam to Christianity in 1984, he was forced to leave his family. A missionary disciplined Yero.

Today, Yero is pastor of a church, and privately disciplines new converts not ready to make public decisions. He trains others and assists Houser. Together they produce radio broadcasts to reach the Fulani for Christ.



**STEADY, STEADY** — Fulani herdsman hold a steer while Southern Baptist missionary Mike Houser (center) treats it for sleeping sickness. Houser uses his skills as a veterinarian to open doors for the Gospel. The Fulani of Nigeria, West Africa, are primarily nomadic cattlemen who consider themselves to be the "keepers of the torch of Islam." (IMB photo)

Through his veterinary work with the Fulani, Houser builds a base of friendship and trust. His wife Jennie focuses on educating four daughters and assists in operating a farm-home in the West African bush.

Just three years ago, the IMB dug a well for the Housers. Before that, they used rain water from their home's roof funneled into a cistern.

When Houser returns from vaccinating cattle, his two younger daughters

run to greet him. Deborah, 11, opens the gate. Ruthie, 9, jumps on the running board of their white pickup and rides to the house. Deborah jogs, plays violin, and sings alto in their family ensemble. Rebekah, 14, is a future teacher who enjoys art. Elizabeth, 15, is a clever writer with an interest in pediatric nursing.

*Editor's note: Some names in this article have been changed for security reasons.*

## Mali villagers fear persecution but choose to worship Christ

MALI, West Africa — In a small Bambara village, light from a lantern cuts the dark of night. Tea is passed around. Village men have waited months for this conversation. Excitement is palpable. Occasionally one or two other men join the growing circle, visible only when they come into the light.

All know the importance of the night. They need more nights such as this one.

This village is like countless others in Mali. Villagers here suffered severe famine last fall, eating anything they could find, unsure they would eat the next day.

Harvest did not come soon enough but this village not only starves for food — it needs the Bread of life.

"There will be some persecution," says one village believer. "A person needs a level of spiritual understanding to resist temptation, to be able to stand."

Their new faith changed their lives. Each believer already has come a long way. Their village claims Islam as its overall faith, but animism (worship of nature and natural objects, such as trees and animals) drives its way of life.

Yet when these villagers came to know the Good News through chronological Bible storying, the stronghold of traditions began to waver.

Every believer recounts vast changes since he accepted Jesus Christ. One man was released from anger. A few quit turning to magicians to help solve problems. Several became faithful to their wives. One believer reports he no longer sacrifices chickens to get "protection" for his fields.



**DISCIPLING** — Missionary Susan Roach meets with a fellow believer outside a village in Mali before they go into the village to lead a chronological Bible storying group. Susan and her husband Steve believe Bible training is key to reaching all Bambara with the Gospel. (IMB photo)

While each new believer shares amazing changes through faith in Jesus, they fear former religious practices will overcome their newfound faith without additional Bible training. Of 19 men who initially claimed Christian conversion, only five

remain committed. Animistic and Muslim teachers, they say, are good teachers with clever arguments.

"(The teachers) are able to take a new believer not capable of defending his faith and turn him back to one of these other religions," one believer

says. "I want people to get enough training to be able to defend themselves and stand against this effort to turn them from their new faith."

Steve and Susan Roach, International Mission Board (IMB) strategy coordinators for the Bambara people, say biblical training is necessary not only for this group of new believers, but also for all Bambara people. In fact, it's their plan. They say building a strong church in this village — one that can take the Gospel to neighboring villages — is easily in sight.

Steve recalls how one believer in the village said, "We cannot go back to what we were, but we don't know how to go forward." Steve knows if these men have proper discipleship training, they can make a huge difference — not just in this village, but in the surrounding area.

For many reasons, Steve says, this particular village is strategic to the spread of the Gospel. First, it's still devoid of Islamic influences although the village claims Islam as its overall faith. Believers here fear greater Islamic practice because village leaders have invited an Islamic school to come in.

For now, Islamic influence is minimal since the imam, or Islamic religious leader, is the village drunk even Islam forbids the use of alcohol.

"They're not as steeped in Islam as they are in animism, their traditional religion, and typically, it's easier to reach people in traditional religion than in Islam," Steve says.